



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, December 27, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most networks led with reports that Prime Minister Abe arrived in Hawaii today and visited the Ehime Maru Memorial and the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, saying that the premier will visit Pearl Harbor tomorrow and release a joint statement with President Obama. Fuji TV gave top play to a follow-up report on a Japanese exchange student who was killed in France.

AMBASSADOR

Ambassador Kennedy says PM Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor "incredibly historic moment"

Fuji TV reported at noon on its interview with Ambassador Kennedy in Honolulu, during which the Ambassador said PM Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor is an "incredibly historic moment" and "a great tribute to the U.S.-Japan alliance." She also reportedly said the visit demonstrates "the power of reconciliation" and that "rebuilding trust and friendship" leads to reducing conflict in the world. The network said the Ambassador is expected to accompany President Obama and Prime Minister Abe when they visit Pearl Harbor tomorrow. Concerning President Obama's historic visit to Hiroshima, the Ambassador was quoted as saying: "The welcome he received from the Japanese people is something that he will never ever forget. It was a great honor for me just to be there." Asked if she has any advice for her successor, she reportedly said: "Never go to sleep because there are so many wonderful things to do in Japan. Twenty-four hours a day you could be having the greatest experience of your whole life." To the question would she stay in her post if asked, she said she would love to keep working for U.S.-Japan relations because she loves Japan but does not think that will happen.

SECURITY

Okinawa Defense Bureau resumes relocation work in Henoko

NHK reported this afternoon that the Okinawa Defense Bureau resumed relocation work in Henoko at around 2 p.m. today, saying that since Okinawa Governor Onaga is set to thwart the construction, the conflict between the central and Okinawa governments is expected to intensify. The network said the relocation work had been suspended for about nine months, adding that about 200 people opposed to the relocation protested the resumption in front of the gate of Camp Schwab today. According to the network, the defense bureau will begin full-scale relocation work from the beginning of next year, including placing buoys in the ocean to mark the off-limits area and conducting drilling work for a seabed survey.

Suga conveys to Onaga GOJ's plan to swiftly resume relocation work in Henoko

NHK reported this afternoon that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga met with Okinawa Governor Onaga at the Kantei this morning and told him that the GOJ will swiftly resume the relocation work in Henoko following Onaga's withdrawal of his rescindment of his predecessor's approval for the landfill work in Henoko. According to the network, Governor Onaga told Suga: "There have been no proper discussions on the matter. In view of its relationship of trust with Okinawa Prefecture, I would like the GOJ to hold prior discussions." Onaga also told Suga that he will continue to use every power he possesses to thwart the relocation work, saying: "If the government is asking us to understand its position, I would like to ask the government to understand Okinawa's position. Okinawa has no choice but to take a hard line." Suga reportedly responded by saying that the government "is making the necessary preparations for resuming the relocation work." According to the network, Suga also told reporters: "Relocating the base to waters off Henoko is the only solution and we will proceed with the plan."

Onaga withdraws rescindment of landfill permit to enlist public support

The two major Okinawa papers reported heavily on Okinawa Governor Onaga's decision on Monday to withdraw the rescindment of the landfill permit for FRF construction, suspecting that he did so despite opposition from his supporters based on the judgment that public support in the mainland for his anti-Henoko relocation campaign might have been weakened if he chose to ignore a recent Supreme Court ruling that deemed the rescindment "illegal." The governor was reportedly afraid of being potentially viewed as an "outlaw" who defied the top court's verdict. Ryukyu Shimpo projected that the Abe administration intends to resume the FRF construction quickly by reinstalling buoys in waters off Camp Schwab to demarcate the construction zone as early as today with the goal of sending a message to the defiant Okinawa leader that the central government has "no intention to back down," in the words of a GOJ source. The paper speculated that Foreign Minister Kishida's announcement on Monday regarding an effective accord reached between the USG and the GOJ on narrowing the definition of the civilian component to be covered by the SOFA was intended to mitigate the anticipated strong reaction from Okinawa to the planned resumption of the FRF construction work.

USMC resumes Osprey aerial refueling training

Sunday's Ryukyu Shimpo gave prominent top coverage to a statement made to the daily in writing by USMC authorities in Okinawa that said: "Flight training for the MV-22 Ospreys, including aerial refueling, was resumed on Dec. 19." In an email sent to the paper, the authorities also said: "All flight drills will be performed within mutually-agreed upon training zones. From the standpoint of ensuring operational security, details such as schedules are not disclosed." The article said this explanation is incompatible with the central government's view that the U.S. military resumed normal Osprey training last Monday except for aerial refueling. In a follow-up report, the Monday edition mentioned that Defense Ministry officials were perplexed by the Marines' explanation on the resumption of aerial refueling training since the Japanese side had assumed that such drills were still suspended.

- [**To reduce Okinawa's burden of hosting U.S. bases, take realistic steps**](#) (The Japan News)
- [**Editorial: Okinawa's understanding necessary for effective Japan-U.S. alliance**](#) (Nikkei)
- [**Cartoon: PM Abe and Gov. Onaga**](#) (Mainichi)
- [**Ishigaki Mayor accepts deployment of GSDF unit**](#) (Nikkei)
- [**LDP's Nikai conveys to Onaga his intention to cooperate on Okinawa development**](#) (Yomiuri)
- [**Defense budget: Experts' views**](#) (Nikkei)
- [**Editorial: Increased defense budget must help SDF swiftly respond to situations**](#) (The Japan News)
- [**Editorial: Defense budget must be scrutinized for cost effectiveness**](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [**Okinawa budget reduced over rift between national, Okinawa governments**](#) (Nikkei)
- [**Cabinet Office allocates 5 billion yen to help remote islands**](#) (Asahi)
- [**Public Security Intelligence Agency gradually increases personnel**](#) (Asahi)
- [**FY2017 budget draft allocates 692.6 billion to MOFA, down 3% from FY2016**](#) (Mainichi)
- [**Japan's defense budget to hit all-time high for fiscal 2017**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

- [Japan adopts new guideline to allow SDF to protect U.S. warships](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Daily Reports on SDF Operations in South Sudan Discarded](#) (Jiji Press)

INTERNATIONAL

- [BOJ the top buyer of Japanese equities](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Cartoon: PM Abe and President Obama](#) (Sankei)
- [Japan, UK to deepen nuclear cooperation](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan “paying attention” to Chinese aircraft carrier’s movements](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan pledges \\$500 million in fresh aid for refugees](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Transport minister to visit Indonesia, Myanmar to market Japan’s technological prowess](#) (Nikkei)

ECONOMY

- [New organization to promote agricultural, food exports](#) (Yomiuri)
- [TPP measures officially shelved](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [LDP eyes livestock support in absence of TPP effectuation](#) (Japan Agricultural News)
- [No end in sight to Japan government spending](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan plans shaky step toward fiscal health in draft budget](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Fifth delay in Mitsubishi jet delivery — it’s official, almost](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: Japanese gov’t lacks sense of crisis on debt reliance](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Mitsubishi passenger jet delivery may be delayed again](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Can FY17 budget realize Abe’s ‘investments for the future’? / Balance growth, fiscal reconstruction](#) (The Japan News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 26](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 25](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 24](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 23](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Dec. 22](#) (Nikkei)
- [Membership figures for LDP factions](#) (Yomiuri)
- [LDP, Komeito secretaries-general meet to mend frayed ties over casino bill](#) (Nikkei)
- [Komeito holds first meeting on measures against gambling addiction](#) (Nikkei)
- [Rengo President calls for resuming meetings between government and labor](#) (Nikkei)

SCIENCE

- [Fisheries Agency issues notice to cease unauthorized fishing of Pacific bluefin tuna](#) (Mainichi)

SOCIETY

- [No. of newborn babies in Japan falls below 1 mil. for 1st time](#) (Kyodo News)

OPINION POLLS

- [76% of Japanese "do not feel affinity" with Russia, Cabinet Office survey](#) (Nikkei)
- [30% say Japan-China relations will "worsen," Mainichi Shimbun-Saitama University SSRC joint poll](#) (Mainichi)

TV PROGRAMS

["Planet Earth II" documentary series – Prologue](#)

"NHK Special" on Friday aired a prologue to the new "Planet Earth II" documentary series, which is an international joint project to capture video of wildlife using drones and state-of-the-art cameras and equipment. The program showed spectacular footage of such animals as snow leopards, Galapagos land iguanas, falcons in New York, and leopards in Mumbai.

“Planet Earth II” – Part 1: Surviving in extreme environments

Sunday's "NHK Special" aired Part 1 of the "Planet Earth II" documentary series, focusing on animals living in the mountains, deserts, and tropical forests, including golden eagles in the Alps, snow leopards in the Himalayas, lions in the Namib Desert, and other unique animals and insects living in extreme environments. The program used state-of-the-art cameras to show how these animals are able to survive in such harsh surroundings.

Changing how Japanese people work

Saturday evening's "NHK Special" focused on the serious issue of long work hours in Japan. The program said a total of 2,159 people committed suicide in Japan in 2015 because of overwork, saying that although it has been recognized as a problem for a long time, no effective measures have been taken to completely resolve it. The program reported on a major IT company that had been working on reducing overtime with little success and found that the real issue was the "mindset" of the employees who depended on overtime pay. The program said the company successfully reduced overtime by providing bonuses to sections that allowed employees to take a lot of paid vacation days. Experts, celebrities, and ordinary citizens discussed how to resolve the issue, with one expert pointing out the need to increase Japan's productivity especially among white-collar workers and the service industry, stressing the need to raise awareness that working long hours is unhealthy and leaving work early is actually a good thing.
